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DEBRIEFING BY OETRICH OF SEMANTIC AND SECANT

The debriefing of SEMANTIC and SECANT was very revealing and satisfactory especially after both cleared the LCFLUTTER.

The first basic issue which had to be clarified was the degree of compromise caused by the January torture and interogation of SECANT. The interrogation by OETRICH and a check on the LCFLUTTER revealed no compromise of any assets.

The main topic the Guatemalan Police hampered on throughout the interrogation was of a plot against the government by SECANT and ESODIC I. No mention was even made in the interrogation about CALLIGERIS. Since there was absolutely no truth in this story SECANT was on solid ground throughout the torture and interrogation.

After this point was clarified and CALLIGERIS, SECANT and SEMANTIC cleared the LCFLUTTER a detailed debriefing commenced on the internal assets of the CALLIGERIS organization. SECANT and SEMANTIC provided facts, figures and names of leaders, potential leaders and followers in the 9 important areas. Although at the time SECANT and SEMANTIC left Guatemala these people had not been assigned specific responsibilites ; they had been in touch with them and all were for the cause and willing to receive instructions and do their part. It was very gratifying to note the confidence these men have in their organization and their ability to get the job done even a little outside help especially arms and ammunition.

The overall operating procedures which included; security, compartmentation, couriers, receiving points for perople coming out of Guatemala for training, finances, repsonsibilities for different tasks, et. was discussed in detail with SEMANTIC, SECANT and CALLIGERIS. Although these people have not received any formal training in clandestine tradecraft it is remarkable what they know and how fast they pick up new ideas.

The Military angle of the operation was discussed in detail with SECANT and CALLIGERIS. The internal Guatemala PW assets look fairly good.

The Political, propaganda and intelligence problems were discussed in detail with SEMANTIC and CALLIGERIS. The propaganda responsibility belongs to ESSENCE.

The political action program which is not tied together at the present time was mapped out and a workable plan worked out.

This follos the LINCOLN planoof bringing all the anti-Communist groups together under PUA and form a basis for a future political party. The formalizing of this plan should not take long since the skeleton already exists and the different anti-Communist groups are only waiting for positive direction. A meeting is scheduled in the near future in Tegucigalpa between CALLIGERIS and Mr. Nufio the leader of PIACO , one of the strongest of the anti-Communist groups.

The Intelligence picture has not changed except for a possible compromise of one of the CP penetrations by the compromise of one of the couriers. The forming of intelligence nets in the 9 target

areas is pushing ahead. This is not as big a job as it may seem since the people are already in the areas and working for the organization. What is necessary at this time is to assign specific responsibilities to the different people.

The problem of infiltrating arms was discussed at length and thorough search for all possibilities made.

This is definitely a tremendous task since the amount is quite large. Plans were discussed for internal reception details will be covered by PM.

Provided SALVADOR collaborates with us the job will be made much easier since we have one route in southern Salvador which has already been checked over which arms can be carried into Guatemala by jeep. The possibility also exists of using oil tankers which are sealed and not inspected at the border. This possibility is presently being checked. The routes over the mountains in Honduras are open and being checkdd constantly.

The possibility of black air drops was discussed and both SEMANTIC and SECANT feel they can be safely made in certain areas under the control of their people. CALLIGRIS was a little apprehensiv e of air drops and favored landing and unloading at certain isolated strips. This all claimed could be done with very little danger.

SEMANTIC and SECANT made a very good impression on ONTRICH, CADICK and LUGTON with their detailed knowledge of the internal Guatemalan situation and their optimism on being able to carry out the job.

~~SECRET/RYBAT/PBSUCCESS~~

PLACE: Tegucigalpa

SOURCE: SECANT

DATE: April 1954

SUBJECT: Interrogation conducted by Mathew P. ONTRICH

1. Army Vulnerability

The Army of Guatemala presents two qualities of vulnerability: one structural and the other purely tactical.

2. Structural Vulnerability

a) With a few exceptions, it lacks the spirit of sacrifice and self-denial that is required by the true military profession.

b) Great lack of confidence latent in the mind of all its individuals and organizations, due to the great number of information agents that the G-2 has placed in all the military units and dependencies.

c) Lack of technical preparation of the superior hierarchies.

d) Ignorance of a humane military administration, based on a national military doctrine.

e) Slight sense of cooperation for joint work. Lack of renunciation of purely personal desires and interests on the altars of an intelligent and patriotic discipline.

f) Failure to observe hierarchical respect, a fundamental principle in every army.

g) Slight sense of responsibility in the fulfillment of the purely military tasks and in the services in general.

h) Lack of necessary loans to satisfy the rudiments of good training as well as the non-existence of supply of arms and ammunition.

i) Doubts presented for the officers as a result of Communist Party activities. The Government supports all these activities and is developing the Party in alarming form. This shows in all official activities.

j) Lack of means of transportation and communications indispensable among all organizations to be able to act efficaciously in an emergency situation.

k) Manifest lack of ability because of lack of services to make even a partial mobilization.

3. Tactical Vulnerability

a) Inappropriate installations.

b) Installations very well known.

c) The ways of approach

d) The ways of transit toward critical points

e) The slowness of mobilization

f) The lack of reserves and support.

4. It is an alarming preoccupation for the Army in general that the higher authorities of the Government, as well as some leaders of the institution itself, agree on arming the Communists and their allies, the official parties. The arms for the most part have come from the military arsenals.

5. There are capable military experts in the country, on whom the Government can count, such as:

a) Lt. Col. Gildardo [illegible] Peulve

b) Col. Oliverio CARDENAS

c) Lt. Col. Agustin [illegible] K.

d) Lt. Carlos CASTANEDA

e) Major Manuel SOSA

f) Major Jose Luis CRUZ

g) Col. Juan [illegible]

h) Lt. Col. Rolando CHINCHILLA.

6. If faced by Communist masses or masses directed by Communists and armed, the Army would attack them if they turn against the authorities or against the Army itself. Otherwise, it would stand aside.

7. The Army in general is worried about not receiving equipment and armament. They have received some from the United States, from Czechoslovakia, from Switzerland, and possibly from Mexico; the amounts are relatively small.

They do not believe that their own leaders arrange the delivery to the Communists, official parties and to the police of what little armament they succeed in acquiring.

8. The demoralization of the Army has existed for a long time, despite the fact that from the personal point of view they are in a good situation. In view of the lack of special and urgent means like armament, ammunition, gasoline, etc., panic may ensue.

9. Among the officers themselves there are certain traditional rivalries, such as that between line officers and graduate officers. Lately a new rivalry has become outstanding, which will be quite fatal for the Army's future: between revolutionary officers and non-revolutionary officers. Rivalry also exists between the officers who receive all the benefits of the revolution and those officers who receive nothing but work and the privations of barracks' service. There is a marked difference between the officers who worry about the institution and the country and those officers who are less concerned about the fate of the country. Among the majority of the officers there is an enormous rivalry with the Communists, although the latter praise the individuals of the armed services every time they have an opportunity.

10. The following Army officers enjoy a good reputation:

a) Col. Anselmo CASTELLA Amezquita

b) Col. Enrique PERALTA Azurdia

c) Col. Pablo DIAZ G.

d) Col. Oliverio CASASOLA

e) Col. Lizandro ORTIZ

f) Col. Roberto LORENZANA

g) Col. Oliverio CABRERA

h) Col. Agustin DONIS K.

i) Lt. Col. Oscar MENDOZA A.

11. The following Army officers enjoy a bad reputation:

a) Col. Enrique GIRON Alvarez

b) Lt. Humberto GARCIA Cruz

c) Col. Humberto SOLAR S. Godoy

d) Col. Rogelio CRUZ Werr

e) Col. Juan Jose SERRA

f) Lt. Col. Agustin ALDANA

g) Col. Jose Angel SANCHEZ B.

h) Lt. Col. Eduardo WEYMAN

i) Col. J. Antonio SAHAVIA

j) Col. Akfredi LENUS Alador

k) Lt. Col. Raul Reina ROSAL

l) Lt. Col. Carlos SARTI

m) Col. Francisco GOZENZA

n) Lt. Arturo CASTRO Moncada, etc., etc.....

12. Col. Angel SANCHEZ is considered in Army circles an irresponsible person, who neglects his functions and responsibilities as Minister of Defense. He is never in his office; and, when he is, it is at rather late hours. He is given to excessive drinking and spending enormous amounts of the Army budget for his own benefit.

13. Col. Carlos Enrique DIAZ, although not a soldier with technical ability or the vision required by his profession, is a capable man, especially for keeping up in the present circumstances. He has a great ambition to become President of the Republic and for this has sufficient means within his reach.

14. Col. Luis A. SIRON, despite his being a good person, is completely inept for a command of responsibility.

15. The President, the Chief of the Armed Forces, the Minister of National Defense, the Chief of Staff of the Army, and the Zone Chiefs, as well as the Section Chiefs of the Staff of the Army are susceptible to direct propaganda without a resultant loss of prestige among the attackers.

16. Gossip re the rivalries and intrigues is based on many reasons, such as: bad installations, scarcity of uniforms, discrimination among the officers for giving loans, poor distribution of work. Some have the additional charge of training and interior service, others have only social commissions or go on leave. There is also gossip about easy and rapidly increasing wealth of the leaders, about the use of the troops for services to the leaders, about the conviviality of leaders and officers with individuals of the official parties and the Communist Party, about the policy of the Government in international matters.

17. There is no anxiety regarding Col. Elfego [illegible]. The same is true of Col. Enrique PASTORELLO. Col. Anselmo CASTILLA [illegible] is esteemed for his straight conduct and especially for his honesty.

18. Guatemalan officers love to hear attacks and difficulties presented to the leaders of the official parties, as well as to the Communist Party in general. They like to hear about the anti-Communist activities.

19. Army personnel can be found who will switch their allegiance for a relatively small bribe, such as an amount equal to or a little higher than their salary. There are others who would want double what they earn. This is a matter of appreciation of the person to be touched. It is necessary to make a careful analysis of him in order to be able to say with absolute certainty how high a bribe has to be offered. Each person is different in this respect.

20. The officers are disgusted by the isolation to which President ARBENZ has voluntarily submitted, by the difficulty there is in getting to talk with him, his Communist tendency, his nearsightedness in seeing the national problems, as well as his foreign policy. They like his personal appearance and the advantages he gives to those who put themselves unconditionally at his disposal.

21. ARBENZ is known by the following degrading nicknames within the Army:

Pale Face; Green Peas Arbejas (sic); Morphine; Leukemic.

22. The real rulers of the Army are:

a. The Chief Officer of the Ministry of Defense, Lt. Col. Carl Reina ROSAL;

b. Lt. Col. Juan [illegible];

c. Lt. Col. Agustin [illegible] and

d. Major Daniel CASTROL, Secretary of the Headquarters of the Armed Forces(the latter less than the others.)

23. There are conflicts between the commands of the corps and of the zones with the main barracks over various matters of supply and different purchases; Between the commands of the corps and zones and the Staff for reason of disciplinary attributions and for the interpretation of the orders. There are great differences between Staff offices and those of the Ministry of Defense, over administrative and technical matters. There is a difference of opinion between the Ministry of Defense and the agrarian section of the Army. There is a difference between the garrison corps and the Air Force corps. In the Air Force there are intrigues and rivalries for matters of stability and administrative posts.

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Narración sucinta de mi captura, a raíz del ataque a la Base de "La Aurora", en Noviembre de 1950.-

"La noche del domingo 5 de noviembre, se presentó a mi domicilio un número grande de guardias, unos uniformados y otros en traje de paisano, registraron toda la casa y preguntaron a mi Señora por mí.
Antes de abrir la puerta, mi esposa vió por una ventana y pudo constetar la presencia de varios vehículos de la Policía (Guardia Civil), deinmediato me lo comunicó, teniendo que salir en pijama y descalzo por la puerta de atrás, para poderme esconder, primero en la casa vecina y luego en unos pequeños bosques, que se encuentran en esos lugares.-
Después de algunas peripecias y de estar en casas de confianza, regresé nuevamente a mi domicilio, por urgencias de familia y por mi estado de salud, ésta la tenía tan quebrantada que tuve necesidad de permanecer en la cama algunos días, razón por la cual hubo necesidad de llamar un médico, (Dr. Barracout"), quién me recetó algo y dió parte de mi presencia en mi domicilio.-
A los dos días de la visita del médico, para ser más exacto, el 21 de noviembre, a eso de las 0530, fué invadida mi casa con lujo de fuerza y ya no me fué posible evadir la captura, fué así como se me condujo en una radio-patrulla, al primer cuerpo de la Guardia Civil y depositádo en la celda número 5.-No está demás decir que la incomunicación absolutes la primera medida tomada en esos casos.-
El 23 por la noche, a eso de 2200, fuí vendado y atado de manos, se me condujo, al lugar denominado la "Pila" (patio superior, del primer cuerpo y localizado exactamente abajo de la última ventana sur del Templo de San Francisco).-
Se me llevó al cuarto de los muertos, y se principió el interrogatorio; se me preguntó insistentemente en lo siguiente:

1o.-Quién me había hablado para participar en al "golpe"
Contesté: que ninguno.-
2o.-Qué si Castillo Armas me había hablado al respecto.
Contesté que nó.
3o.-Que si nos visitabamos con el Coronel Castillo,
Contesté quesí, pués eramas amigos.-
4o.-Que que otros militares de alta o de baja, estaban comrpometidos en el movimiento, contesté: que lo ignoraba.-
Sobre esas preguntas, se insitió hasta las 0300, ante cada negativa, se me procedía a darme golpes en la plantas de los piés o a darme golpes eléctricos .-
Las preguntas continuarón así, durante 4 noches, durante una de ellas, se me preguntó si nonocía a un muchacho Paredes, siempre contesté que nó, era la verdad, pero ahí se encontraba el jóven Paredes y dijo que si me conocía y que yo lo había invitado para ir a pasear a la Base y una vez ahí , lo obligué a cuidar unos tanques

Forma e interrogatorios, durante mi captura el 21 de enero último.-

A las 1215, pasé por mis dos hijos que estudian en el Colegio "Santa-Cecilia, depués de haber ido a traer a una mi nena, que está en otro Colegio. Por haber estado en esos días en reparación la Avenida Bolivar que es la vía normal para llegar a donde vivo, tuve que tomar por la avenida Santa Cecilia, lugar por donde todo el tránsito de vehículos tenía forzosamente que pasar; por razones de amplitud, de calidad del piso y del gran número de vehículos, había que caminar lentamente.-
Durante el tracyecto de las últimas cuadras de la citada avenida Santa Cecilia, pude notar la presencia de una Radio-patrulla, a lo que no le día ninguna importancia. Al llegar cerca de la Parroquía del Guarda, se apareó al jeep, que yo guiaba y un Agente de migración (policía personal del Director de la Guardia Civil), me hizo señas de alto, a lo que obedecí de inmediato.
El Agente de civil, me conminó a acompañarlo por orden que tenía de llevarme, para un pequeño interregotario.-
En principio me opuse, por no llevar ellos orden de autoridad competente paraproceder a una captura, pero ante mi negativa el resto del personal de la radio-patrulla me amenazó con una comninatoria que no dejaba lugar a dudar de las intenciones policíacas; hicieron subir al vehículo de ellos mis hijos y nos condujerón a cercanías de mi casa de habitación, donde tuve que bajar del carro para que salieran mis hijos, en ese momento fuí brutalmente agredido por cuatro policías, conduciendome inmediatamente a las celdas de la Dirección de la Guardia Civil, no está demás decir que el vehículo de la policía hizo un gran escándalo pues fué durante todo el trayecto sonando la sirena.-
En las celdas dela DGGC, estuve hasta las 1630, hora en que se presentarón dos Guardias uniformados y me condujerón por unos pasillos hacia el Primer Cuerpo de la Guardia Civil, llevándome a la celda número 5, pude notar que todas las celdas estaban vacías y los detenidos por delitos comunes habían diso encerrados, para que no pudiera ser visto.-
A las 1700 se presentaron a mi celda los magistrados de la Segunda Sala de apelaciones, para comunicarme, que estaban cumpliendo con el Recurso de exhibición personal, que mi Señora había interpuesto ante ese Tribunal en contra de el Director de la Guardia Civil y del Jefe de la Guardia Judicial; fuí preguntado por los magistrados de que si había sido objeto de mal trato, a lo que contesté negativemente, no obstante de que si se me habían dado unos puntepiés.-
El mismo día y a las 2230, se presentó a mi celda un hombre alto de vestido claro, quién me hizo que me pusiera de pié y inmediatamente me vendo los ojos y me ató las manos, otros dos hombres me condujerón a la "Cocina" y ya en ella, se me desnudó, ya colocado en la orilla de la pila, se me preguntó:

1o.-Donde me reunía con el Coronel Miguel Mendoza para conferenciar.-
2o.-Dónde me reunía con el Coronel Manuel Arana para platicar,
3o.-Qué en donde se encontraban las armas que habían venido de los Estados Unidos.
4o.-Qué cuando hiba a efectuarse el "Golpe"

A las preguntas anteriores contesté que nada sabía y que no tenía nexos, ni con las personas mencionadas, ni con ninguna otra que tuviera actividades políticas; esto lo tuve que negar mil veces, y ante cada negativa se me introducía entre la pila con la cabeza hacia abajo, de donde me sacaban hasta que calculaban que ya me estaba ahogando..-

Durante el interrogatorio en cuestión, no me mencionarón a ninguna de las personas que fuerón capturadas, ni se me mencionó al Coronel Castillo.-
También es significativo, que ni por ilusión se me hablara sobre las grandas de mano y el revólver, que según el parte de la Policía habían encontrado en el vehículo que me recogierón; pués la acusación era por agresión a mano armada y tenencia de explosivos, pero esto se les olvidó a los verdugos.-

Una de las personas que interrogaba, tenía un acento como cubano, en uno de los descuidos se me aflojó la venda y pude notar la presencia de dos personas vestidas de gris, creo haber reconocido al Subdirector de la Guaridia Civil y al Jefe de la Judicial.-